



# GILA NEWSLETTER

8TH EDITION

July 13, 2002

## Welcome 82nd Engineers!



As much as the 9th Engineer Battalion respects and admires its sister battalion, it may be bold to proclaim that the sight of the Blue Babe has never been so welcomed. Key leaders from the 82 Engineers, Blue Babe, stationed in Bamberg, arrive here in Kosovo this week to conduct their first KFOR 4B Recon. This signals a major milestone for the Gila Battalion as it illustrates another step closer to coming home. You can almost hear a collective, "its good to see you Blue Babe!"

This past week also saw the Gila Battalion hosting a Joint Engineer Conference, bringing together all the allied engineers across Kosovo. This conference furthered our partnerships with various allied engineer units and also provided a venue for learning about each other's capabilities for possible future operations.

A few days later, members of the United Kingdom's National Search Center visited several key leaders within the battalion. Although it was a short stay, these experienced British soldiers had much to offer in terms of searching procedures and techniques. The Gila Battalion currently has a few soldiers in England participating in Search Instruction, sponsored by the same UK National Search Center.

You may have heard about the Family Support Video produced and shot on location here in Kosovo. Please contact CPT Titko or Lee Ann Wilson for details concerning this video- its for the families!

## Happy 4th of July, Again!!



9E's very own ISG Thomas was chosen to sing the National Anthem at the opening ceremonies of the Camp Bondsteel 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration. Rumor has it that negotiations are ongoing with several record labels for a ludicrous post-army career.

Last week the soldiers and civilians stationed on Camp Bondsteel, including foreign guests, were treated to a grand 4th of July celebration. This week the entertainment train kept on rolling. The Washington Redskins' Cheerleaders gave a performance to hundreds of highly appreciative soldiers on Wednesday night. Therefore, for the second week in a row the professional cheerleaders and dancers from Washington D.C.'s sports teams entertained the troops. Thanks D.C.!!

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## HHC/9E: Headhunters

Both temperature and tempo have risen this past week. This week's spotlight is on the medics. Our sincere congratulations go out to SGT Snell (aka Doc) as he reenlisted last Friday next to the chapel with a beautiful view of the Kosovo countryside in the background. So our newly reenlisted "Doc" writes the following:

"Boy!!! Time sure does fly when your having fun; or is that when you're just plain busy? The 9<sup>th</sup> EN Medical Section has been quite busy since arriving in Kosovo. We support the Quick Reaction Force on a daily basis, and support just about every major mission Task Force 9<sup>th</sup> Engineers is involved with. We have even made time to support a few of our own, most notably the Medical Civilian Assistance Program (MEDCAP). The 9<sup>th</sup> Engineer Medics have taken part in two MEDCAPS to date, visiting the villages of Novo Brdo, and Sucice. This program lends medical assistance to the local population and allows us (the medics) to do what we do best —help people in need. While on these MEDCAPS, we also had the opportunity to work with some of our counterparts from other KFOR nations such as the Polish and Ukranian medics and doctors.



This kind of teamwork not only builds our joint KFOR spirit but also spreads a little good will.



*SPC Schinsky shows his proficiency at donning his NBC protective gear during at one of HHC's CTT stations*

Your medics have been training hard for the Expert Field Medical Badge (EFMB). We have conducted training in areas such as emergency MEDEVAC training, CPR, NBC, Litter Obstacle course, EMT, Individual Combat Carries, and Survival skills. Our hopes are high and spirits are soaring for the next EFMB, which is scheduled for the last two weeks of August. Keep your fingers crossed. We look forward to seeing you again but are staying busy in the meantime."

In other news from the company, we celebrated the 4<sup>th</sup> of July with a Company Picnic, which included some inspirational and patriotic words from both CPT Stoll, and Chaplain Blount along with some awards presentations for many soldiers who have achieved the high standards required for the APFT badge. SGT Galaz, PFC Tucker-bey, and SFC Johnson worked hard preparing a lot of good food that was much appreciated. Several of the athletically focused soldiers were busy representing the company in the many different sports tournaments on Bondsteel. Our soccer team (with the help of four TMK members from our partnership unit) advanced to the second round by soundly beating the Military Police Battalion (3-0), but then lost to a very tough team from the Greek 501<sup>st</sup> Mech Battalion (0-3).

The past few days have seen the company complete Common Task Training (CTT). The training consisted of 18 tasks that included map reading, NBC, weapons, and communication tasks. Several soldiers fired at an M16 range ran by Charlie Company, and SPC Villanueva and SPC Snow fired on the M249 range ran by Alpha Company. LT Olson and Specialists Makar, Athey, and Niles visited the grade school that we sponsor and talked with the principal who gave us many letters from his students to send to students in the states. The letters are currently being translated and will be sent back to a school in Virginia that had started this pen pal program. All of the students are very thrilled to have a connection to kids so far away in the U.S. that, despite large differences in language and circumstances, they have found to be not so different after all.

All this and much more in one week's work!

HEADHUNTERS!





## A/9E: Breach Hell!



*SSG Labrador inspecting PFC Rogers's weapon*

The past week proved to be another un-eventful week, which is a good thing while guarding the largest American installation in Kosovo. While the soldiers of the platoons were busy executing the guard mission, the leaders of the company were certifying their technical knowledge of doctrinal training by reading manuals and taking tests. The planning cycle is in full swing as the platoons put the final touches on the plans for some upcoming ranges.

1<sup>st</sup> platoon continued keeping Camp Bondsteel safe by conducting Force Protection Guard Duty this week. On Sunday, SSG Labrador as the Commander of Relief (COR) on Gate-3, conducted a guard mount inspections on cleanliness of soldiers weapon, uniform, and asked questions on general knowledge for Force Protection guard duty. SGT Battle received a Task Force Falcon coin from CSM Beam the MNB(E) Command Sergeant Major for being outstanding Commander Of Relief during an unannounced inspection. On Wednesday, SFC Agmata, as the Sergeant of the Guard conducted briefings and inspections of the COR for each sector and asked questions on their knowledge and special instructions. All of the inspections by the senior NCO leadership ensure that Camp Bondsteel remains protected by a highly disciplined, professional force.



*SPC "Biff" Andersen proposes to "Buffy" during the Washington Wizard Show*

2nd platoon also continued Force Protection Guard Duty this week. Highlights this week include PV2 Wood receiving the coin of excellence from CSM Rather for his performance during a pre-guard mount inspection and PV2 Gilmon receiving a coin of excellence from CSM Beam for his appearance and knowledge during an unannounced guard mount inspection. SPC Andersen, however, was the luckiest member of the Dirty Deuce this week. He was a participant in the Washington Wizard cheerleader's show on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. SPC Anderson was the envy of all the single soldiers in the 9<sup>th</sup> Engineers.



*SFC Agmata inspecting the Commander of Relief's weapon*

3rd Platoon continued with Camp Bondsteel force protection duties throughout the week as well. SPC Burgoin represented the Platoon and A Company extremely well at the Soldier of the Month Board on Wednesday. His dedication will surely motivate his battle buddies to perform at a higher standard during future boards. 1LT Thompson and SFC Villa completed planning for a project that will keep the Platoon busy over the next two weeks. To support upcoming Expert Field Medical Badge testing for medics across the Task Force, we will be clearing two vehicle and five dismount lanes through a wooded area on CBS. We look forward to the challenge and the chance to complete an important mission using our own equipment, sweat and hard work.

This week, headquarters platoon said goodbye to SPC Carmen as he departed Kosovo bound for Schweinfurt to complete his ETS. Upon leaving the army, SPC Carmen, sapper extraordinaire, will move back to Bowling Green Ohio and become Jason Carmen, student extraordinaire. We all wish SPC Carmen the best of luck, for he will be missed in all daily operations. In the coming weeks, we look forward to ACE-driving, chainsaw-wielding, demolition-exploding, weapon sappers as we move back into mission and training company!







## B/9E: Outlaws

Dear Outlaw Family Members,

This week was busy and the company will remain exceptionally busy for the next few weeks. We just picked up the mission for the Task Force 1-77 Quick Reaction Force. This tasking, while not extremely difficult, requires that every last soldier is on mission. This cycle will last for another few weeks and then we will enter a training cycle, where the company will train on their engineer war time mission. The platoon leaders and platoon sergeants have planned some exciting training which will keep everyone busy. Busy is a good feeling though, because it makes time pass quickly. This week, we have another farewell. 1LT Hill will be going to HHC/9th Engineer Battalion. We do not have many pictures of him, except the one of him and SPC Cottrill being chased by a mob of people in one of the MWR 5k races here at Camp Monteith. He will be missed. He is being replaced by 1LT IX, who is already showing great promise. The other attached picture is a rare photo. It is probably the 1st and only time that SSG Moore ever went out the gate. Notice that his hand is wrapped tightly around his weapon, but SPC Hinson is just enjoying a pose in the city. There have been some question on the safety of Gnjlane. I assess that the city is very safe. There is probably more crime in the average U.S. city. The only difference is the type of crimes that occur here. There were also questions about the FMPP program. Yes, there is every opportunity in the world for soldiers to do things that they would not write home about during FMPP, but there are also opportunities to visit a very beautiful country. Bulgaria is once again just like any European city. It has nice areas and not so nice areas. The soldiers are not banned from either area. They just have to use their personal judgment, as to which parts they visit. The last question of interest is when are the Outlaws coming home. The truth is that we are not exactly sure. I know it is between the 8th and the 21st of November. I don't see a possibility before that time, nor do I see an extension past that time. On the bright side, CPT John Litz is my replacement and he is coming for a reconnaissance this week. That means that the time is getting short for us, but long for him. Sorry John. God Bless,  
CPT Bill Lash



*SSG Moore and SPC Hinson*



*LT Hill in the 5K MWR Race*





## C/9E: Dawgs of War

Our second week of engineering reconnaissance, mine-sweeping of helicopter loading zones and drop zones (where parachutists land) and route upgrades for a Multi-National Brigade (East) mission paid off on the 11<sup>th</sup> of July when soldiers from the Southern Europe Airborne Task Force (commonly known as SETAF) landed to use the roads we improved and the sites we inspected.

In addition, Lieutenants Christopher and Lavicka attended bridge construction training at a Swiss base-camp in the German sector. With a swimming pool and sauna at their disposal, we were all a little more than envious!!!

Our company actually took second place in the Fourth of July Commander's (Sports) Tournament. That was quite an achievement as we were the only company level team to place in the top three. First Place was a Military Police Battalion and third place was a Field Artillery Battalion. Our running team put us over the top to place second. Running under the Dawg banner was SGT Mark Andrews, SPC Bedore, SPC Crawford, CPT Hackenberg (the incoming Commander), and SPC Roy (the team captain). They came in a total of 11 minutes ahead of the next team.

This week I promoted Privates Paredes-Mejia and Thorne to Privates First Class, and Specialists Casanova and Smith to Corporal. All promotions were well deserved and we gained two great Non-Commissioned Officers! Corporal Casanova, Specialists Lindauer, Tosch, and Rhinehart each received a driver's badge and safety award for their outstanding performance this year.

In addition, SPC Jason Vertheen re-enlisted for three years at Fort Lewis, Washington.

This week has been a great training week with A&O working their equipment, digging and bridging in the local earthen dig-site, Second Platoon fulfilling most of the bus escort missions, and First Platoon fulfilling MNB(E) emergency reaction force requirements.

We are continuing to get supplies from Germany and now mailings from the US have started picking up for the school. We greatly appreciate your continued support for not only the school, but also the soldiers and want to say thanks for spreading the word about our sponsored school! DAWG 6!!



*SPC Roy and SPC Bedore push each other to get to the finish line*



*The run team poses with their award*



*A few good men: A&O supports SPC Vertheen as he re-enlists for three years*







## A/94E: Warriors

Soldiers of A Co 94<sup>th</sup> ECB(H) are developing and learning more each day.

The 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration was definitely a good one for the Warriors. A/94<sup>th</sup> soldiers were victorious in every sport they played on the 4<sup>th</sup>. Camp Bondsteel dwellers felt the rath despite the festivities. The basketball team cancelled out the 121<sup>st</sup> SIG BN. Our championship volleyball team punished 1/7 FA with 25-12 and 25-11 victories. The softball team silenced the 630<sup>th</sup> MPs with the 19-9 win in the third inning. The A/94<sup>th</sup>, HHC/9E and TMK combination soccer team proved beneficial with their 4-0 win over HHD/709<sup>th</sup> MP. Although July 4<sup>th</sup> proved to be an excellent day for competition, this is only the first of four rounds. The road definitely gets tougher as we progress.

Route Lion remains a huge part of the Horizontal section's life. SSG Daisy continues to prove himself as an excellent construction supervisor and Non-commissioned Officer. He remains ahead of schedule according to original estimates. He also ensures that younger, less experienced equipment operators are trained and developed. SSG Daisy and his squad deployed here from Hohenfels with construction foremost on their minds. The level of care, interest, and development is second to none.

SSG Kenny and his squad work in conjunction with C/9E on a road upgrade that is vital to the freedom of movement for KFOR vehicles. SSG Kenny and his squad are well ahead of schedule and will be completed in days rather than the originally estimated weeks. The Bulldozer and Grader operation comes easy to SSG Kenny's well-trained squad.



*SSG Daisy and his squad balance working with the TMK and the local populous*

SPC Gonzales, the company Commo Chief, has once again proven himself an asset to the unit. On short notice, he developed, prepared and presented a class on the notorious OE-254 antenna. The purpose of the class was to ensure all soldiers could set up and break the antenna down to standard. A/94<sup>th</sup> will conduct an M249 range for the Battalion where this specific task will prove critical.

The upcoming M249 range is the source of much anticipation. This will be the first range that we conduct for the Battalion and here in the Balkans. The Leaders and soldiers of the unit are going the extra mile to ensure the range is flawless. SSG Davis, the Construction Platoon Sergeant has conducted recons and developed an excellent plan. SGT Depina will be the master of ceremonies conducting Primary Marksmanship Instruction. The armorer qualified SGT Depina is the A/94<sup>th</sup> M249 guru and will share his knowledge and tricks of the trade with all attendees.

We also had one of the mighty Alpha Warriors reenlist this week. BG Lute, MNB East Commander reenlisted SGT Addley Saimbert on 29 June 2002. The ceremony was conducted in BG Lute's office with all available NCOs present. In closing, General Lute concluded that SGT Saimbert should invite him to his promotion ceremony; if not to pin the new rank on, then just to be present.



*BG Lute reenlists SGT Saimbert*





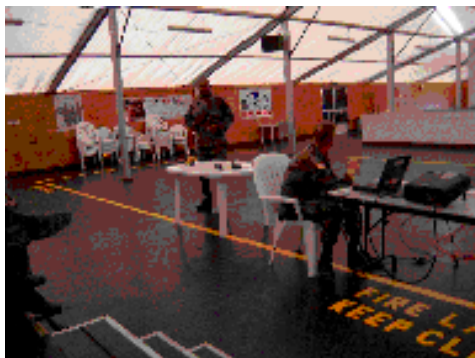
## 737th EOD

Aftershock 737 continues to conduct all assigned missions, providing excellent support to the entire MNB (E) sector. 737<sup>th</sup> is continuing its partnership with other EOD units from other countries. We are preparing to conduct training with our British, German, Danish and French counterparts. The EOD exchange program is a great way for all EOD technicians to learn about alternate ways in approaching unexploded explosives. SSG Blanchard and SPC White also gave a UXO class to about fifty soldiers from the Southern European Task Force (SETAF) for an impending Airborne operation into Kosovo. Aftershock 737 also participated in the Joint Engineer Conference, which involved engineers from the French, German, British, Italian and American sectors. The 737<sup>th</sup> put on an EOD demonstration by setting up equipment and machinery used by EOD. The conference was a great success.

*CPT Green*



*SSG Barrell demonstrating use of EOD tools  
(Joint Engineer Conference)*



*SSG Blanchard providing UXO class to SETAF*

## Scenes from KFOR 4A



*A/94 performing road repair*



*Washington Redskins' Cheerleaders' performance*



*TMK (made up of local nationals) assists in the emplacement of a culvert; a joint venture with A/94th Engineers*



## Scenes from KFOR 4A (continued)

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*SPC Padilla (A CO) displayed his uncanny knowledge of history and force protection operations during CSM Rather's guard mount inspection earlier this week*



*LTC Idlet presents SPC Carmen with an his PCS Awards*



*HHC Soccer Team at halftime vs. the Greeks. From L to R kneeling: Chief Hunter, SPC Palacios (free agent from A Co), LT Ridenour (A/94<sup>th</sup>), CPT Hackenberg. Standing: CPT Stoll, SGT Beare, LT Phillips, TMK member, SPC Minyard, SPC Reyes, Zanal Zeka (TMK), SSG Pereira (A/94<sup>th</sup>), Fejzulla Fejza (TMK), and TMK member.*

Editor in Chief  
The Gila Adjutant

